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wives ignore their children, children regard their parents with hatred and distrust instead of filial love. The effect of such crowding on the bodies of its participants is quite as apparent. All sorts of preventable diseases flourish, cripples are common, and idiots—the result, generally, of unnatural family relations—are found frequently.

At this time, while temporary depression in the trades by which most tenement dwellers gain a livelihood has thrown thousands out of work, it would be unfair to write of existing destitution as typical, so I shall say nothing of it. The invariable rule may be laid down that when the tenement dweller can get work he works constantly and earns too little; when he cannot, he suffers, that is all. Hundreds have told me that even in the best of times they have no recreation other than liquor, and there are thousands, notably the Jews, who do not even get drunk.

All this is but the barest and most meagre outline of the situation which must be faced. Two methods of improvement are recommended—one the razing of old buildings and construction of new ones on better plans in the same districts in which the evil now is worst; the other the providing of cheap rapid transit to the suburbs and cheap homes for the poor there, with a view to depopulation of the crowded urban quarters.

EDWARD MARSHALL.

AMATEUR CLASSES IN NURSING.

IT HAS seemed to the writer that a more general knowledge of the latest methods of nursing the sick is desirable among all classes, and that enthusiastic young women might here find a new field for gaining and disseminating knowledge, and, consequently, increasing the sum of "happiness below." The idea is somewhat in line with the establishment of cooking schools, so beneficial in giving a new dignity to the laboratory of the kitchen, as well as disseminating new ideas of preparing food. There were times when such institutions were not needed, when, in our primitive civilization, and even in post colonial times, every woman found time to educate her daughter in plain and even fancy cooking. These luxurious later times find mothers so oppressed with social duties, so absorbed in reading and writing and calling and entertaining, in dressing and planning dresses, so dependent on servants, that what are, after all, important accomplishments, have been allowed to become "out-of-date." And yet, when emergency arises, many a woman would honestly confess she would willingly forget how to play a sonata if she only knew how to make a good salad or omelet.

This leads up to the consideration of a vocation that is even more out-of-date than the household cook, and that is the family nurse. We must repeat the old lamentations; life is not all a holiday, and not only will hunger and sickness come, but emergencies and ill-fortune will often throw the duties of cook or nurse on the members of the family. Why not, then, give the daughters a course of instruction in the art of nursing the sick as well as in schools of cookery? If the cook is as necessary to physical, mental, and even moral well-being as the engineer is necessary in the steamship's hold, the nurse is as indispensable as the pilot that we take on to thread the rocks and shoals, whether we are "crossing the bar" to the ocean or entering the harbor of health.

Happily, the household nurse is not yet wholly extinct. Many a fond mother keeps up the traditions of the old-fashioned nurse, devoted to her own loved ones in sickness, as well as ready to "lend a hand" when a neighbor is stricken. But there are modern methods, developed in our schools for nurses, such as that at Bellevue Hospital, which it seems would be of great value if disseminated among the people by supplementary schools for amateur nurses. It is not to be expected that these amateur nurses would encroach on the domain of the trained nurse so as to imperil the latter's means of livelihood. The amateur—using the word in its dignified sense, as one who follows a calling out of love for it—would not receive so thorough a practical training as the trained nurse at the hospitals; she would not assist at amputations or be left alone to perform the last duties in the hour of death. As for a superfluity of trained nurses, there is no prospect of it. It is altogether too hard to find good ones now in emergencies; and the trying work of such a life does not invite a great oversupply of devotees.

No, the idea is simply this: To instruct such of our daughters and wives as have time—even sons, if such will—so devote themselves—so that they can care for the members of their own family, friends, or poor people, in ordinary sickness, according to the latest and best practice in nursing methods. Here, it seems, there is a field for real enthusiasm, real devotion, and keen interest in scientific methods, aided as it would be by the thought that the novice in nursing was learning how to care for her own loved ones, ease their hours of pain, or carry the benediction of intelligent service to the homes of the poor. Ah, it is only the sick sufferer who can tell how priceless to him is the trained hand and head, that knows just how to raise him in bed, just what to feed to him, how to do the numberless little things, a proper performance of which often turns the balance between health and disease, life and death. When to all the deftness of a trained nurse is added the loving sympathy of a sister or friend, the influences towards recovery are extra-magical. There is a luxury of content and trust and gratitude felt by an invalid who knows he has a faithful, loving nurse that goes far towards putting him, spiritually as well as morally, on the road to recovery. Let our young women once appreciate the value of being thus useful and they will be eager to learn all they can of an art that the doctors say is often more important than their own in saving life. The eye that sees a need and the hand that performs the deed for the invalid before he can ask it is indeed the eye and hand of "an angel in the house." Let us not be deceived. These are the valuable moments of life, when we have passed a cup of water to the suffering and really helped in the battle of existence.

It seems as if some regularly trained nurse, with experience in private nursing as well as her school diploma, might be found to give a course of lessons and lectures, with practical illustrations, to a class of girls and women, and so add to her income. So many details could be taught in a little while—arranging pillows, governing light, draughts, etc.; raising sick people in bed, preparing and administering medicines, what to do in emergencies, poisoning, scalding, drowning, choking, etc.; how to prepare poultices and blisters, what foods to give in different maladies and how to prepare them, etc., etc. A lecture on the symptoms, first treatment and care of cholera patients would be especially useful and timely. The class might have the benefit of oversight by some competent hospital physician who would give additional lectures on general topics as to care of the

sick. It might be an encouragement to learners and stimulate a fellow-feeling of devotion to give attendants on the lectures who pass a satisfactory examination a certificate as to such attendance. This might entitle them to wear a simple pin with the initials of "Amateur Nurse" or "Home Nurse," giving a bond of sympathy with each other and a certain credential as to capacity in working among the poor. It is to be hoped that these suggestions may lead to the forming of some class in nursing, not as a "fad," but as a means of enlarging one's usefulness. Whether cholera comes or not, whether we have a war or not, the call for intelligent nursing of the sick is incessant and never fully answered. A girl may never do more than nurse Brother Tom through the grip or a Sunday-school scholar through the measles, but if she does that well, in the best way, she will have earned honor. Others, however, prepared or unprepared, must fight the dread enemy with their loved ones in the darkest of hours; and a course of lectures on nursing will be a great help to these nameless Florence Nightingales of our own homes.

C. H. CRANDALL.

THE RIGHT TO DIE.

A LEADING London paper has recently been conducting a gruesome discussion, under the caption "Tired of Life," upon the question, "Is suicide wrong?" It is significant that a large proportion of the writers who answer this query argue in favor of the moral right and sometimes the duty of self-destruction. Among other prominent contributors to this discussion is William Archer, the well-known dramatic critic, who, after asserting that nowhere in the Bible is suicide condemned, says: "What we want, what our grandsons, or great grandsons will probably have, is a commodious and scientific lethal chamber, which shall reduce to a minimum the physical terrors and inconveniences of suicide, both for the patient and for his family and friends. In a rational state of civilization, self-effacement should cost us no more physical screwing up of courage than a visit to the barber's, and much less than a visit to the dentist's. Mental effort will always keep people from wantonly and in mere caprice putting an end to themselves."

This morbid discussion has attracted great attention, and taken in conjunction with a recent magazine article, debating the question whether men and women have a right to kill their parents, relatives or friends, who labor under distressing diseases, or who believe that the time has come when they may depart, or who are worn out and useless to society, has suggested the title of this article.

To begin with, it is evident that such a question cannot be debated on Christian principles. These absolutely forbid a Christian to debate self murder. He accepts his life, and tries to do his best with it. He owns that he has no more right to kill himself than to kill any one else. He is a soldier who dares not desert his post. It is therefore necessary, while we write, to hold faith in abeyance. What we want to do is to show into what a dangerous sea the advanced thinkers have got.

The writer of the article in question is rather contradictory; but that is little to him. On the one hand, he denies the right of the State to execute a murderer. He argues that even when a man has forfeited all right to live